



**DSP Recognition Week 2022**  
**September 12th-17th**

## **NASP Top 10**

**1. Faye Kriekermier - Hands of Heartland - 4 years as a DSP**

“Faye came to us from an event at Midland College. She had never been a DSP, but did have experience working with people with disabilities. Faye also has a love for the Arts. When she found us it was like a dream come true for both of us. Faye was hired to start up our art program. Faye is an amazing artist and we knew we wanted to do art that we could sell, but we also wanted to take that to a new level. Faye and I talked about opening a store but wanted it to be different from other things we had seen around town. We also knew it would be hard for us to fill a store with enough product to actually have a full store. Faye came up with the idea of a store that sold products made by people with disabilities around the world. So off she went, she put together a proposal for CEO and she was granted the permission to put the store in action. Faye jumped right in and started having the people she supports researching companies with products made by individuals with disabilities. The people we support made phone calls and sent emails to these companies. They researched the products, asked for samples, evaluated the products and the price point, and made decisions on if they thought they would sell in our community. Some of the companies were not ready to go wholesale, but they didn't give up. They arranged business meetings with companies to see what it would take for us to be able to purchase their product. Faye supported the people we work with in purchasing and building displays for the store. The store was completely built from the ground up and is now run totally by the people we support. They continue to research new products, monitor inventory and complete the reorders. On top of all of the work she does supporting the others she is going to school to become a LIHMP.

Faye is so giving and so accommodating so the people we support get to live their best life. Faye plans activities outside of her day hours and not only for the people we support but for the entire community. Faye is always there if someone is having a bad day or needs an ear. Recently, Faye received a call from a person we support. It was late at night, and he was having some issues that needed to be addressed by a medical professional. The police had been called and when this person arrived with the police to the hospital he jumped out and ran. He found a safe spot and called Faye. Faye was out of town and attending a concert. She could have just not answered since it was not her scheduled shift. However, Faye could never do that, so she stepped away from the concert and answered the phone. Faye could tell right away that

this person was in crisis and was able to walk him through the crisis. Faye was able to get him to go willingly to the hospital with no further need of law enforcement. He went on his own to get the help he needed. The people we support are so lucky to have some like Faye in their corner. We are lucky to have Faye with us!”

## **2. Houssain Ablad - Angel Guardians, Inc. - 10 years**

Houssain was nominated multiple times! “Houssain has always been a man of few words and a big heart. In the years that I have worked with Houssain I have learned so much from him and valued his work ethic as well as his personal and professional relationship with individuals. Houssain excels at finding unique ways to interact with each individual. He practices repetition and communicates in a way that is clear, direct, and effective. Houssain drives a daily van route for individuals at AGI and has excellent attendance. He is known to other staff as the "Magic Man" because he is able to redirect and support clients when other staff have tried several tactics and failed. You can often see other DSP's and even Managers coming back from attempting a task with an individual and hear them say "Houssain, can you please work your Magic with XYZ" and BAM there he is there to assist. We can also count on him to have the "eagle eye" mentality when in large groups. He is the first to react in most situations and follows protocol wonderfully. Lastly Houssain is always picking up extra van routes, coming to meetings, completing extra training, and getting all documents done on time and efficiently. I honestly couldn't imagine a better DSP than Houssain Ablad. I am grateful to work with him everyday and continue to learn from such a talented and genuine fella!”

“Houssain is the hardest working DSP I know. Houssain has been in the field for years, and is still one of the most compassionate, thorough, detailed DSP's I have had the pleasure of meeting. Houssain has helped so many participants at Angel Guardians and has always done it with a smile on his face.”

## **3. Michelle (Missy) Marth - Region V Services - 24 years (longest of all nominees!)**

“When asked what makes a good DSP, I used to respond with a long list of qualities one would possess. Now, I simply tell people that I look for genuinely good people. Simply put, Missy Marth is exactly that. She is genuinely good. She will give you the shirt off her back, bend over backwards, run herself ragged to make sure you are taken care of and that your needs are well met. She is compassionate, dependable, honest, and one of the most authentic people I have ever met. She is the ultimate optimist and the truest believer of there being good in everyone. If someone can't find it, Missy most definitely will. She has touched the lives of so many people over her 24+ years at Region V Services.

Missy is kind, considerate, and has a zest for life that is exemplified in her work and relationships with those she works with. She tries to make everyday count for others. She comes up with great ideas and experiences people can enjoy, and she takes pride in her work. Missy is an avid advocate for people, and she encourages their self-advocacy as well. She speaks highly of the work that is done at Region V Services and is always encouraging people in the community to learn about DD Services and what they entail. She goes the extra mile

every time for the people she works with, as well as people she doesn't. Literally, Missy will drive to every Walmart in the tri-state area because that is what someone wants her to do; or try every Burger King, simply so he knows which one is the "best." She gives her all to serving others, whether they are affiliated with Region V Services or not. She has spent her career working pro-bono with several people within the community that do not have the support of DD Services. When asked why she doesn't ever say "no," she simply says, "they need my help." Selfless is what Missy is. She is a selfless giver of her time and her heart. She sincerely cares not only about the people we support, but people in general.

Over the last 24 years, Missy has worked with numerous individuals in their homes, apartments, group homes, etc. She has assisted people with going on vacations, getting to medical appointments, moving, finding jobs, tackling relationships, and so much more. She has taken on the roles of counselor, taxi driver, relationship advisor, mentor, and friend to so many. Missy does so much good for people, all the while, managing her own personal life roles of being a wife and mother. Missy's daughters are both in high school now and actively involved in just about everything, yet Missy still manages to make everyone in her life (family, friends, co-workers, people supported, etc.) feel like a priority. Rarely do you see Missy driving through town without someone in her car that she is either working with, or simply helping by volunteering her time. Missy has assisted so many people in attaining and maintaining independence that wouldn't have been possible without her support.

I have often had conversations with Missy about how she balances everything, and she just laughs and makes a joke about not doing it well, but she is wrong in so many ways. She is not only an excellent DSP, but she is an exceptional human being, and we are so incredibly blessed to have her as one of ours."

#### **4. Malik Crawford - Vodec - 5 years**

"Malik Crawford has been with Vodec 3 years and has been in the field for 5 years. Malik went to school for behavioral science where he decided he wanted to help people for a living. Malik states he has always been a people person. Malik grew up in a big family where they always were helping each other.

Malik loves to come to work every day to see his clients. He loves to see people laughing and having fun. His goal is to always make an impact on someone's day and life. Malik is a favorite DSP among the clients that Vodec serves. Everyone one wants to be in Malik's group. Malik provides a fun, energetic, and upbeat work environment daily. Malik jumps in to help run fitness classes, nutrition classes, and take consumers to extra activities whenever he gets the chance. Malik comes in to work with a positive attitude everyday and never complains about his responsibilities or tasks. Some of our favorite moments with Malik are dances, water days, getting pied in the face, and he was a top vote for the employee ice bucket challenge where consumers and other employees got to drench him. Malik is always smiling, dancing, and getting the consumer motivated to work and to just have a great day. It's hard to find employees like Malik that take the time to learn about what makes the clients happy and helps them get

through their hardships. Malik will take the time to have one on one conversations with clients or just getting a group together to jump around and have fun. Malik is an outstanding DSP and is an inspiration to all of us at Vodec.”

#### **5. Lacey Palik - Region V Services - 9 years**

“Lacey is an outstanding DSP and makes a positive impact on the folks she supports and our team! Lacey is an advocate. She works day in and day out providing exceptional care for the three gentlemen she supports, while encouraging them and teaching them how to advocate for themselves. One example of this, when a specific gentleman she supports is having difficulties adjusting to new staff, she sets up a mediation with that gentlemen and that staff. She encourages the gentlemen to tell the staff how he’s feeling and in turn teaches him how to respectfully listen and accept feedback. Together they work to make a plan to prevent misunderstandings and make their days better. Lacey promotes positive relationships and interests. She helps folks foster their current hobbies and assists them in finding new ones such as playing pool, swimming at the local swimming pool, going to movies, playing cards, attending ball games, and being foodies, to name a few! Lacey assists folks in maintaining their familial relationships and helps the gentlemen plan birthday parties to include their friends and families.

Lacey is resilient and empathetic. Recently, Lacey experienced the loss of a gentleman she supported. This was tough on the entire team, especially Lacey. Even while Lacey was grieving, she showed great empathy for this gentleman’s roommates, teaching them coping skills and ways to grieve. She continues to celebrate his life, with his roommates, by sharing milkshakes and other treats at his graveside. Lacey is a team player and a hard worker. She mentors new and existing staff and despite the sometimes overwhelming work everyone has to do, Lacey is always offering a lending hand to help her peers balance bank statements or complete program reviews. She works a 2nd job, outside of Region V, and still finds time to pick up shifts for her coworkers when needed.

Even through the most stressful times Lacey can still be heard laughing. She embodies professionalism. Lacey always tries to stay upbeat, look for positive outcomes or compromises in difficult circumstances, and focus on the good. She is open-minded and meets each challenge as an opportunity for growth not only for herself but also the gentlemen she supports. Lacey has helped everyone around her do the same. It is with great pleasure that I respectfully submit this nomination for Lacey Palik as one of NASP’s Top 10 DSPs.”

#### **6. Roxann McCarty - North Platte Opportunity Center - 12.5 years**

“Roxann has worked at NPOC for 12.5 years as a DSP. In this time she has worked in both day and residential services. Roxann currently works in one of our small group homes. She works a 60 hour shift, which provides the residents consistency in care and support. Roxann cooks delightful, healthy and tasty meals for the three ladies in the home. They ask for her when she is not there and look forward to her return. Roxann is such an advocate for those served and has given her life to the betterment of each of them. One of those in the small group home is on

dialysis that they do at home each night. Despite Roxann being older and extremely worried about the process, she has committed to learning how to hook the lady up and how to disconnect her from the dialysis machine. The training for this is an entire three days given by the renal dialysis nurses at the hospital, this is something Roxann has completed. Roxann is always willing to cover vacation and sick leave of her co-workers, sometimes working 80+ hours a week. Roxann plays games, listens to music, watches television, does crafts and attends community events with the ladies, ensuring they are part of the community as much as possible. Roxann worked through the Covid pandemic, working 2-4 weeks straight to keep those served healthy and safe. Roxann brings her bold personality with her everywhere and is a strong advocate for those served.”

#### **7. Lynette Bollig - Region V Services - 12 years as a DSP**

“It is with great pleasure that I write this nomination for Lynette Bollig for her Excellence as a Direct Support Worker (DSP) NASP award. I believe that Lynette is the best choice for the NASP award because she consistently displays our agency values of respect, integrity, teamwork, and empathy. I work with Lynette at the Columbus Region V office and strongly believe she’s a prime candidate for the DSP award because of her personable people skills and her relentless contributions to ensuring the people around her have a meaningful day; she has grit and determination, and it shows through her unfailing commitment to people served day in and day out. Lynette has dependably provided direct care for a gentleman for 10+ years, to whom any person can see she brightens up his day. She makes sure each day starts well and ends well. With this gentleman's required level of care, there’s a lot of interpersonal experience and trust involved. Without that trust, motivation declines and the relationship will simply fall apart. Beyond assisting with the basics, she also provides companionship and emotional support – whether she knows it or not. If KD repeatedly unbuckles his seatbelt, Lynette can crack a joke at it and the behavior stops. If KD is having a rough day, Lynette wants to make his day better. It’s a kind-of sibling bond, you might say. He is more willing to work alongside Lynette due to a close and harmonious relationship that is built upon concern and understanding over many years. There is value in getting to know the person who you are serving. Through supportive experience - good days and not so good days, focusing on a person's preferences and outcomes; working with family members; and not giving up – a DSP should get the ultimate caregiver award. Clients need to know that their DSPs have their backs in any given situation.”

#### **8. Cary Culler - 360 Community Services - 12 years**

“Cary is 67 years old and could retire, instead he chooses to show up everyday and make a difference in our Individuals’ lives. Cary was a high school teacher for most of his career as well as the head coach of the Basketball teams at the schools where he worked. He currently referee's on the weekends for youth sports. Cary is in better shape than most of the twenty year old's that work here. Cary's current Individual that he spends most days with came to us in a more unusual way. He was not born DD but instead had a horrific accident that caused his current disabilities. He walks back and forth at a fast pace all day long. Instead of Cary just sitting down and watching him and asking him to engage. He walks with him and talks to him

and prompts him to have conversations. They walk everywhere together, side by side. Cary is tremendous and deserves first place, he truly cares for the people we serve.

**9. Jason Faust - Region V Services - 14 years as a DSP**

“Jason and I have worked together supporting people at Region V Services for about 13 years. In those 13 years I have known Jason to be a person of integrity, who is dependable, and an amazing teammate. You know how a person tends to have to wear many different hats in whatever role/position they are in? Well, Jason is a person who wears many of these hats including ones that go above and beyond. One hat is as an advocate for the people we support. An example of this role, Jason was at the mall with a few men, and he noticed that they were not given the same attention as other customers while in a store. Jason calmly observed and then decided he was going to quietly address the store clerk. When he realized that his words were falling on deaf ears, he decided that it would be best to leave as he did not want the men to become upset. He returned to my office and reported the incident. We did call the manager to "educate" her. Another hat is one of bridge/trust builder between guardians, family members, and Region V Services. Jason accomplishes this with his open and honest communication. One weekend he had an event, and he knew that a man that he supports would enjoy attending, but he also knew that this man could have a difficult time going to events, so Jason invited the man's mother, and aunt. They all went and had a fabulous time. I could go on and on about all the hats he wears including our unofficial handyman, painter, groundskeeper..... I think that one of the hats that he wears in which I am most appreciative of is of a problem solver. As I do not have an assistant, when I go on vacation, I do tend to worry about how it's going while I am gone. This summer I went on my dream vacation, and I did not think about work 1 time. I knew that I could count on him should something come up. His other teammates are aware of this as well as they will go to him should something happen. Jason is definitely a support staff that goes above and beyond, and we are lucky to have him.”

**10. Trevor Borton - VITAL Services, Inc. - 2 years as a DSP**

“Trevor gets involved and quickly builds rapport with the participants on his caseload. He passes on his enthusiasm for fitness and music by joining in and working out alongside participants while offering workout tips. He also watches music videos while explaining music theory with a participant that is interested in music. Trevor has the ability to and makes an effort to get to know his participants and he gears his shifts around them and their wishes. He does this within the steps of the ISP program and the wishes of families and guardians. During a recent service review with a SC, Trevor suggested a task for his program. The SC took the idea to her supervisor who suggested writing an entire program around Trevor's ideas. This indicates that Trevor knows his participants well and has an acute interest in their needs.”